since the procurement of wheat in Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2006-07 was only 92.3 lakh tonnes as against 147.9 lakh tonnes procured in the previous year, to make up the shortfall in RMS 2006-07, the Government took decision to import 55 lakh tonnes of wheat in 2006-07 to meet the requirements of the Targeted Public Distribution System and, other welfare schemes.

Review of BPL and AAY beneficiaries

2772. SHRI M.V. MYSURAREDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have asked the State Governments for reviewing the Below Poverty Line category and Antyodaya Anna Yojana lists of beneficiaries to eliminate ghost ration cards; and

(b) if so, the details of the steps taken by Government to prevent the leakage of foodgrains through such cards?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In order to strengthen Public Distribution System (PDS) in the country after evaluation studies by Programme Evaluation Organisation of Planning Commission (PEO) and ORG-MARG, five regional conferences of State Food Secretaries were held. They were followed by a national conference of State Food Ministers and Secretaries held on 29-03-2006. Based upon feed back of these conferences, a nine point action plan was prepared for implementation by all State/UT Governments. One of the points under the Action Plan is to undertake continuous review of BPL/AAY lists, to eliminate the ghost ration cards. Some of the States/UTs have completed a campaign on this issue and others are continuing the exercise. During this, the respective State/UT Governments review the BPL and AAY ration cards to eliminate the bogus ones from among them. This is an ongoing continuous process.

The. action taken by the State/UT Governments on this issue is reviewed by the Department of Food and Public Distribution during meetings of State Food Secretaries from time to time.